

Utah State Office of Education

Handbook for Speech-Language Pathologists and Speech-Language Technicians Working in Utah Public Schools.

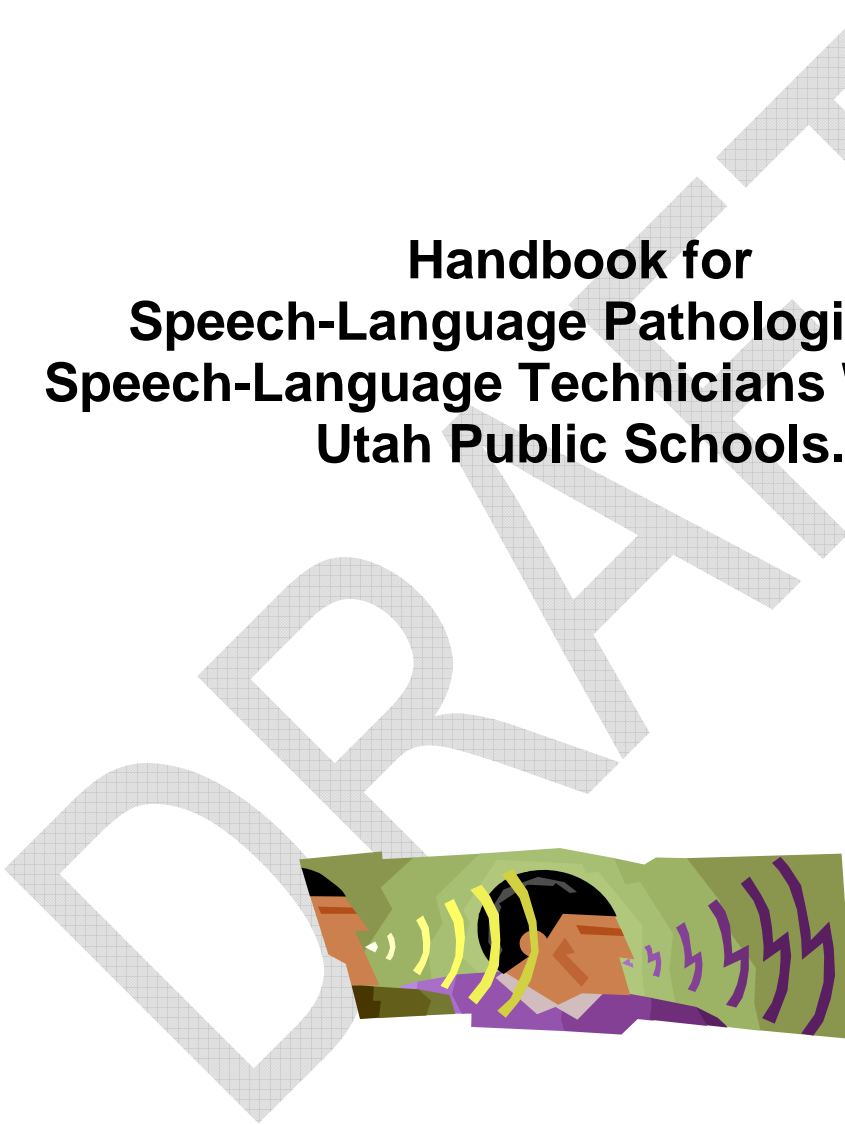


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Background

The Utah State Board of Education has created the Speech-Language Technician license area of concentration for a professional who has completed a Board-approved bachelor's degree in communication disorders at an accredited higher education institution *and* additional training as approved by the USOE. This professional will work under the direction of a qualified Speech-Language Pathologist.

The purpose of this action was to meet the state education agency's responsibility to provide appropriate speech-language services to students with disabilities in the State of Utah in the face of critical local and national shortages of qualified Speech Language Pathologists.

The roles and responsibilities of the supervising Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) and the Speech-Language Technician (SLT) are outlined in this handbook.

Acknowledgements

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Roles and Responsibilities for the Supervising Speech-Language Pathologist

Supervising Speech-Language Pathologists are to fulfill roles as outlined in professional and state standards. They are also expected to adhere to the following supervision ratios, general management policies, and professional development approved by the USOE:

Supervision Ratios. The Speech-Language Pathologist shall:

- A. Supervise no more than 3 SLTs concurrently. Although more than one SLP may provide supervision for a SLT, a SLP should not supervise nor be listed as a supervisor for more than 3 SLTs.
- B. Have clinical responsibilities that balance with the supervisory responsibility for the SLTs. Although direct student contact may decrease for the supervising SLP, student services must remain appropriate to individualized needs documented on the IEP.
- C. Have clinical responsibilities that decrease as the supervisory responsibilities of the SLP increase.
- D. Be included in discussions and decisions regarding the number of SLTs whom he or she supervises. The LEA shall determine the level of supervision necessary to ensure a free appropriate public education.
- E. Communicate on a regular basis when multiple supervisors are used.

General Management. The Speech-Language Pathologist shall:

- A. Be a SLP currently licensed by USOE, and preferably certified by ASHA (CCC), who has been practicing for at least 2 years following licensure. (Graduate student interns are never eligible to supervise a SLT)
- B. Use the SLT only when appropriate. Assure that the SLT only performs tasks within the approved job responsibilities of the SLT.
- C. Be responsible for students who are served by the SLT.
- D. Provide at least the minimum amount of supervision necessary for the SLT's work setting and environment.
- E. Document appropriate supervision of the SLT.
- F. Disclose to students, parents, and staff that the SLT is working with the student under SLP supervision.

- G. Be the representative in all collaborative, interdisciplinary, interagency meetings, correspondence and reports.
- H. Make clinical decisions including the determination of student selection or inclusion/exclusion on the caseload, and dismissal of students from treatment. Communicate with students, parents, family members, and staff about diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment plan.
- I. Conduct diagnostic evaluations, assessments, or appraisals, and interpret obtained data in reports.
- J. Review the individual treatment plan and progress with the SLT at least weekly.
- K. Delegate specific tasks to the technician while retaining legal and ethical responsibility for all student services provided or omitted.
- L. Prepare an individualized treatment plan and make modification prior to or during implementation.
- M. Refer the case as appropriate to other professionals.
- N. Sign all formal documents (e.g., evaluation reports, IEPs, treatment plans, reimbursement forms and reports.) The supervisor should indicate on the documents which activities were performed by the SLT.
- O. Review and sign all informal progress notes prepared by the SLT.
- P. Participate in the performance appraisal of the SLT.

Professional Development

- A. The SLP shall have completed a USOE approved professional development course in supervision.
- B. The SLP shall document training of the SLT and provide ongoing on-the-job training to the SLT.

Roles and Responsibilities for the Speech-Language Technician

Speech-Language Technicians are to fulfill roles as outlined in professional and state standards. They are also expected to adhere to the following supervision ratios, general management policies, and professional development courses approved by the USOE:

Amount of Supervision. The Speech-Language Technician shall:

- A. Receive a minimum of 30% weekly (at least 20% direct) for the first 90 workdays and 20% supervision (at least 10% *direct) after the first 90 work days. *Direct Supervision is on-site, in-view observation and guidance by the SLP while an assigned activity is performed by the SLT.
- B. Receive more supervision depending on the complexity of the students' needs and the experience and skills of the SLT.
- C. Be provided more supervision depending on the complexity of the student's needs and the experience and skills of the SLT.

General Management. The Speech-Language Technician shall:

- A. Represent himself or herself as a SLT working under the supervision of a SLP.
- B. Assist with speech, language, and hearing screenings, without interpretation.
- C. Assist with informal documentation as directed by the SLP.
- D. Follow documented treatment plans or protocols developed by the supervising SLP.
- E. Document student performance and report to the supervising SLP.
- F. Assist the SLP while the SLP performs assessments / evaluations on students.
- G. Assist with clerical duties and departmental operations (scheduling, record keeping, materials preparation, safety and maintenance of supplies and equipment).
- H. Support the supervising SLP in research projects, in-service training, and public relations programs.
- I. Collect data for monitoring quality improvement.
- J. Collect data for compliance with regulations and reimbursement requirements.

- K. Not provide supervision to other employees or volunteers.
- L. Not provide services outside the public school assignment.
- M. Not perform evaluations on students or interpret results of evaluations independently.
- N. Not screen students for feeding/swallowing, acquired brain injury, or autism.
- O. Not be assigned a caseload. The caseload belongs to the supervising SLP who is legally responsible for the student's program development and implementation.
- P. Not participate in parent conferences, case conferences or any interdisciplinary team meeting without the presence of the supervising SLP or designee. The SLT shall represent himself/herself as a technician only.
- Q. Not write, develop or modify a student's individualized treatment plan or IEP in any way, however, the SLT may present information as directed by the supervising SLP at an IEP meeting.
- R. Not provide services to students without following the IEP or treatment plan prepared by the SLP, or without immediate access to the supervisor who shall direct the services.
- S. Not represent themselves as an SLP on formal documents (e.g. IEPs, treatment plans, reimbursement forms, or reports).
- T. Not determine student eligibility for services.
- U. Not dismiss students from services.
- V. Not disclose clinical or confidential information either orally or in writing to anyone without the supervising SLP's permission.
- W. Not make referrals for additional services.
- X. Not counsel or consult with the student, family, or others regarding the student's status, progress, or service without the supervising SLP's express permission.
- Y. Not screen evaluate, demonstrate strategies or treat students with feeding/swallowing disorders.
- Z. Not represent himself/herself as a SLP, but as a SLT working under the supervision of a SLP.

- AA. Not participate in the hiring of other assistants or SLPs.

Professional Development

- A. The SLT shall receive USOE-approved training to meet core competencies outlined in this document which include: a) support instructional and therapeutic opportunities b) demonstrate professionalism and ethical practices c) support a positive learning environment and d) communicate effectively and participate in the team process.
- B. The SLT shall complete a practicum experience before assuming the duties of a SLT.

Competencies

Supervising Speech-Language Pathologists and Speech-Language Technicians will demonstrate skill and knowledge competency standards in order to provide speech-language services in the school.

The Speech-Language Pathologist Supervisor shall have the knowledge and skills to

- A. Know, understand and adhere to the ethical standards of both the education agency and the profession of Speech/Language Pathology
- B. Create a session plan to be implemented by the SLT
- C. Supervise the SLT:
 - a. Select and assign appropriate students to the SLT.
 - b. Determine the nature of supervision that is appropriate for each SLT.
 - c. Establish and maintain an effective relationship with the SLT.
 - d. Direct the SLT regarding screen protocols.
 - e. Demonstrate for and participate with the SLT in the clinical process.
 - f. Direct the SLT in following individualized treatment plans.
 - g. Direct the SLT in the maintenance of clinical records.
 - h. Interact with the SLT in planning and executing supervisory conferences.
 - i. Provide feedback to the SLT regarding skills.
 - j. Assist the SLT in developing skills of verbal reporting and assigned informal written reporting to the SLP.
 - k. Assist the SLT in effectively selecting, preparing, and presenting treatment materials and organizing treatment environments.
 - l. Share information regarding ethical, legal, regulatory, aspects of professional practice.
 - m. Model and facilitate professional conduct.
 - n. Direct the SLT in the implementation of research procedures, in-service training activities, and public relations programs.
 - o. Train the SLT to check and maintain equipment and to observe universal precautions.

- p. Assist the SLT in using appropriate language (oral and written) when interacting with patients/clients and others.
- q. Establish a system of accountability for document use and supervision of the SLT.
- D. Conduct the Performance Evaluation of the SLT
 - a. Provide formative and summative evaluation of therapy sessions.
 - b. Conduct annual performance evaluation.
 - c. Evaluate the supervisor and supervisory process.

The Speech-Language Technician shall:

- A. Support instructional and therapeutic opportunities
 - a. Have knowledge and proficiency in
 - i. Basic phonological awareness and development remediation
 - ii. Basic articulation remediation
 - iii. Basic receptive and expressive language remediation
 - b. Have knowledge of strategies, techniques, and delivery methods of instruction.
 - c. Deliver therapy according to the SLP's session plan
 - d. Record data about the student.
 - e. Organize material and support learning during the instructional process.
- B. Demonstrate professional and ethical practices.
 - a. Have knowledge and adhere to the distinctions in the roles and responsibilities of the student's education team.
 - b. Adhere to all pertinent laws, regulations, policies and procedures.
- C. Support a positive learning environment.
 - a. Use proactive management strategies to engage students.
 - b. Support the student's behavior management plan.
- D. Communicate effectively and participate in the team process.
 - a. Serve as a member of an instruction team.
 - b. Use effective communication skills (written, verbal, nonverbal).

Professional Development

LEAs will ensure that supervising Speech Language Pathologists and Speech Language Technicians have received USOE-approved professional development in order to meet the supervision and service delivery competencies outlined in this document. As a part of this professional development program, the Speech-Language Technician shall successfully complete a practicum experience including receiving instruction, observation of a variety of therapy opportunities, and demonstration of skill.

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